

SUMMARY OF DISCUSSION

Executive Board meeting of the New Jersey Urban League

June 21, 1937

The meeting of the New Jersey Urban League was held in the Halsey Street YMCA in departure from usual board meeting procedure. Present from the Board: Messrs. Hart, Brooks, Garner, Hayes, Russ, Levy, Ormond, Parks, Powell; Messdames Dr. Walfo, Moorfield, Van Poznak; Miss Shepard and Dr. Veil. Visitors: Eugene and Al. Arnold Hill of the National Urban League, Mrs. Helen Washington, and Miss Garner, Dr. Hilton Knovitz and Mr. Van Poznak. The staff: Miss and Mr. Lott.

During the agenda, the executive gave a brief report on the National Urban League conference held in Michigan the latter part of May. The discussion at this conference resulted in the general conclusions that the Urban League must analyze the present movement in the light of their effect upon the American Negro, and also the League's relationship with such movement by the result of such analysis. The League must recognize that the CIO has introduced a new complexion in the Negro's relation with organized labor. The League must take a more active part in labor legislation, adopting such procedure as represented by the Pittsburgh Citizens branch. The conference recommended a change in the handling of national fellowships, urging the extension of financial aid to experienced social workers and to Urban League staff members rather than to students selected on a basis of scholastic attainment.

They opened discussion on "Public Relations", that part of the local program aimed to develop a wider knowledge and support of the League movement locally. Discussion indicated that widely generalized public relations were ineffective; they must be practical by directing our efforts towards specific groups, bodies, events and individuals who can be of direct help to the promotion of the League.

He presented the subject "Financial Rehabilitation" by stating that the League must continue its efforts to increase local chest support of our program. There is all that is left to us as long as we remain a chest agency, because discouragement of the Community Chest offers those who would promote fund raising activities. Mr. Jones suggested \$1.00 memberships which was discouraged by the members as having proven ineffective in this area. Suggestions were offered that auxiliary societies be formed in the several communities. In view of the fact that an Aubury Park and an Englewood Urban League, it was suggested that such be named the Essex County Urban League.

Next, discussing "Racial Relations" felt that the prevention of prejudice is more effective than attempting to change existing prejudices; following this by suggesting that greater emphasis be placed on racial relations programs in the groups in the schools and the churches. Dr. Knovitz felt that labor's philosophy was making extremely necessary our approach to such groups in the line of racial relations.

On the subject "Demonstration in Delinquent Treatment" Miss Shepard felt that the work should be turned towards preventive work instead of the present corrective activities in this department. The possible use of volunteer workers was

as a means of meeting this challenge. A criticism offered was that a demonstration such as this, which perpetuates itself is no longer a demonstration; that this time the effective work which has been done with the juvenile court and the probation department should have been absorbed by the county; that unless there is evidence that the county is willing to assume this responsibility, we should make an effective publicity program, or as an alternative withdraw our worker from this field. Mr. Hill suggested a one day conference with county officials and interested persons to discuss the significance of the wide program and the social embarrassment of the Urban League in order to lay the whole matter before the public and the public.

A discussion on the attitude of the Urban League towards organized labor and the labor front movements was opened by Mr. Garner. Out of this discussion general conclusions were developed that each movement must be weighed carefully to determine its effect upon Negro masses being served by the Urban League; that no general policy could be formulated on such delicate grounds; but that the attitude of the organization must be determined by the judgment of the executive and the governing body. The appointment of a special committee to serve in an advisory capacity in matters was authorized. The President, Mr. Oswald, was further authorized to appoint other committees which the discussion of the evening indicated would be in order.

Matter of a Workers' Institute for the eastern seaboard to be held in the fall was discussed. By motion the executive was authorized to extend to the National Urban League an invitation that such institute be held in Newark, and that a committee be appointed with authority to develop these plans. The conference adjourned 8 P. M.

Respectfully submitted,

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